

The Headless Knight

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Summary: -The Lost Age- The origin of Dullahan. An English translation of NebilimK's tale, rated T for disturbing violence. Another shipping-free fic brought to you by Martin III!

***Chapter 1*: The Headless Knight**

Translator's Notes: Just a little over a year ago, I left a review for the original Spanish version of this story. Besides actually commenting on the story, I asked permission to publish a translation. I never heard back, and looking at NebilimK's profile, it seems like my review came right after she dropped off the face of FF dot net. Seeing as the translation was already done, and I can't imagine an author objecting to having a translation of his work available, here it is. Naturally, if NebilimK shows up and asks me to take it down, I'll take it down.

This should go without saying, but this fic is not representative of my work as a writer. While I naturally had to insert some creative touches(the most significant of which I discuss at the end of the fic), for the most part this is a straight translation. Rewriting everything to make it up to par with my usual writings would not have been an efficient use of my time, and it's arguably better to have a perfectly faithful translation anyway.

The milieu and characters of this fic are all property of either Nintendo or NebilimK. I own nothing but the English translation.

The Headless Knight

script and plot - NebilimK

translation and editing - Martin III

A boat emerged from the dense fog which surrounded Lemuria.

"Captain Lydas, I see land," said a strapping youth.

The captain had to turn slightly to see better, for one of his eyes was missing. The strapping youth took the wheel and handled the boat, while the captain headed down to the cabin for a break.

Inside the cabin was the third crew member, reading an old book on alchemy.

"Feeling better, Francis?" the captain asked.

The Lemurian lifted his gaze and regarded the captain with honey-colored eyes.

"Yes, I already feel much better, thank you," he answered.

"I hope that you'll be all better when we reach land."

"You see Mount Aleph?"

"No, not yet, but have patience..." he said, and then sat down with his companion.

"Aside from that, we have to go up to Sol Sanctum, right?"

"I'm afraid so... but at that point we can count on our psynergy..."

"After obtaining the power of alchemy, we'll be able to use psynergy?" he asked with curiosity.

"I don't know, but if it doesn't go down that way, you can forget about returning to Lemuria."

A couple hours later, the three travelers reached land and unloaded their provisions. They would be in Aleph in a few days if they hurried.

"Shall we sleep under the stars?" the strapping youth asked.

"I'm afraid not, Dullahan, not this time..." the one-eyed man replied. "We have to get there as soon as possible."

"The alchemy isn't going to go anywhere..." the third one protested.

"Stop whining, Francis," Dullahan laughed.

It took five days, and they only slept during two of them. Aleph was a place inhabited only by wild animals and totally devoid of buildings, save the temple, which could be seen from the adjoining hills.

"That's Sol Sanctum?" Francis asked, totally exhausted.

"Yup. Slow down, take a look..." said the strapping youth.

"Certainly not! Knowing that the alchemy is just within reach?"

"What are you talking about, Lydas?" Dullahan said, getting angry. "Don't you remember our agreement?"

"Agreement? What agreement?" Francis returned, equally angry. "Aren't you two counting on me to control the alchemy?"

"I made the agreement because I don't trust even a hair on Dullahan's head," the captain confessed. "I know that Dullahan was in prison many times for theft."

Dullahan backed away. His companions surrounded him.

"Francis, make sure he doesn't move from here; I'll be the one to check Sol Sanctum," he advised.

The youth agreed and the captain moved towards the temple.

"Francis, that old one-eyed man is deceiving you," Dullahan said. "I don't want the alchemy for myself!"

"Of course; that's why you came with us," he said sarcastically.

"I came along to settle down in these lands; I'm sick of Lemuria."

"Then what was that promise for?"

"Well, I made the promise because I don't want to stay with everyone... He'll use the power of alchemy for evil."

"You're trying to trick me, aren't you?" Francis challenged him.

Dullahan drew his heavy sword and Francis mimicked him. Dullahan noticed that while they were fighting, Captain Lydas was scaling the mountain. He would take control of the alchemy.

The strapping warrior informed his rival about the mountaineer, and they both ran to Sol Sanctum for all they were worth. Their effort was useless; they could not reach the height of the mountain. Infuriated, Francis tried to attack Dullahan, but he eluded the youth and slammed him against the wall, where he remained unconscious for a few seconds.

Dullahan then tried to go up the mountain, to the top, where captain Lydas was gathering the alchemy. Sol Sanctum flooded with light, blinding Dullahan. He fell in the temple, where Francis sliced his head off.

Some magic passed over. Dullahan, faceless, got up as if he hadn't taken a scratch. Francis escaped from the temple, frightened. Lydas came down, full of power.

"You betrayed me," Dullahan said.

"What happened? And your... head?" he asked, astounded.

"Alchemy; this is the work of alchemy," he answered. "But already you can't use it anymore, because I conserve some of this power and I'm going to use it to damn you for eternity. Now you're going to live in this temple so that no one can get their hands on the power of alchemy. Now you will be the scholar of alchemy."

Francis never again returned to Lemuria; he escaped to the lands of the north where he lived with a small clan of water adepts, the Mercury clan. Dullahan shut himself up in a dark cavern where he similarly punished himself for what happened. As for Lydas, the Scholar, he had to protect the power of alchemy so that only a pure heart would remain.

The boat on which they came was found by some Lemurian boys. Years after they traveled in search of them.

END

Translator's Note: The one major change I made is the character Francis. In the original, he is named Piers, obviously implying that he is the playable character from The Lost Age. This leads the reader to wonder why Piers is acting so absurdly out-of-character in an otherwise decent

fic, and it isn't until the final sentence that it is revealed that the character is not *the* Piers at all. Cheating the reader is pretty much an unforgivable crime, so I changed the name and removed the awkward final sentence which distinguishes Francis from Piers.